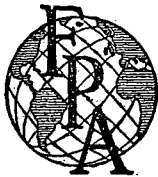


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U.S.-RUSSIAN RIFT POSES DIFFICULT ALTERNATIVES FOR BRITAIN

FOREIGN SECRETARY BEVIN's cautious parliamentary report of May 15-16 on the recent Moscow conference may appear out of focus to many observers in this country, since discussions here concerning relations between Russia and the West are couched in extreme terms and opinions are sharply divided. But Britain's foreign policy, closely geared though it may be to that of Washington, has not yet hardened into a rigid anti-Russian line. The "stop-communism" phase of the Truman Doctrine is still lacking in London, although Bevin hinted that his patience had been sorely tried by "perpetual veto" action on Russia's part during the last two years of peace-making. Having placed great hopes in the four-power alliance to demilitarize Germany, which was first offered by the United States, he was especially disappointed that the pact was not adopted at Moscow. Instead of emphasizing the failures of the conference, however, Bevin looked forward to the November meeting of the Foreign Ministers' Council in London as one of the most vital in the world's history. Should it prove impossible then to reach agreement on the German peace treaty, Bevin warned that the Labor government would be forced to review its entire foreign policy.

LONDON'S PROBLEMS ABROAD. The reasons which lie back of Bevin's caution and London's relatively calm attitude toward Moscow may lead to significant changes in British policy. Criticism from left-wing trade unionists and dissension within the Parliamentary Labor party itself have caused Bevin to go slow in pursuing an unqualifiedly "tough" attitude toward Russia. Domestic economic difficulties have also continually impeded the Foreign Office in its attempt to administer the British zone in Germany and aid traditional British allies on the continent. Britain's foreign financial position, more-

over, appears bleaker at this point than at the end of the war. During the next few months Britain will be passing through a transitional period during which it may adopt a strictly neutral course between America and Russia, with the possibility of aligning itself more closely with Europe.

CRITICS OF FOREIGN POLICY. Present British political trends offer some clues to future foreign policy developments. The most vociferous, although so far not very successful critics of Bevin's handling of foreign affairs have been the fifty to ninety "rebel" back-benchers of the Labor party. It was the leaders of this group, along with the editors of the *New Statesman and Nation*, who recently invited Henry Wallace to Britain. Wallace's views and those of the left-wing rebels are similar in many respects, although the policies of the latter group stem from Socialist beliefs which Wallace would disown.

Bevin's own party critics wish he trusted Russia more and followed the United States less. Believing that peaceful relations with the U.S.S.R. are possible, the critics hope that the Western Powers will offer a loan to Moscow and provide machinery and oil for Soviet reconstruction. They also favor Russia's access to the Mediterranean and would prefer to see such waterways as the Dardanelles, the Suez, and the Panama Canal brought under international control. Their reluctance to maintain close ties with the United States is prompted mainly by fear that Britain's economy will be completely shattered as a result of a depression which they believe is imminent in this country.

Most significant, because it is generally misunderstood in the United States and may also influence future British policy, is the desire of Bevin's critics in the Labor party to see the area of socialization extended to Western Europe. By socialization in this

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case is meant the extension of state ownership over the basic productive enterprises throughout Western Europe and their coordination with Britain's economy. In Britain, of course, the economy is to be dominated by state-owned industry according to the Labor party's program. Laborite rebels assume that socialism can be achieved in Europe within the democratic framework, and would deny that they wish to see one-party governments on the Russian model arise in any western nation. The inherent democratic character of British Socialism is often overlooked in the United States. But there is a tendency on the part of left-wing Laborites to underestimate the differences which separate them from Russian Communists.

The rebel program for healing the eastern-western cleavage is matched by the growing attention given to the possibility of Western European union which Winston Churchill and other conservative groups espouse. In his May 14 statement about European union, the former Prime Minister indicated that some form of economic collaboration would be necessary as an underpinning for this scheme. Both the rebel Laborites and those who favor a United States of Europe, integrated as a regional body within the United Nations structure, base their plans on two important assumptions. First, they believe that European federation is necessary to revive the economy of Europe in which Germany can find its proper place. Second, both groups insist that their plans are based not on the intention of alienating Russia, but on the belief that Moscow will approve of them. To date Russian spokesmen have objected only to the Churchillian idea, but in the end the attempt to socialize Western Europe along democratic lines

may also appear to Moscow as a first step toward the development of an anti-Russian bloc.

WHICH WAY BRITAIN? European union in which Britain can play a prominent political and economic role may well be London's eventual choice. But hope that Anglo-Soviet trade may be increased in the near future has offset some of the thinking of those who favor over-all European union. A British trade mission, headed by Harold Wilson of the Board of Trade, has just returned from Moscow with encouraging reports of preliminary agreement about the full resumption of trade between the two countries. In return for Russian timber, much needed in Britain's housing drive, and cotton, flax and other raw materials, the Moscow negotiators under Foreign Trade Minister Anastas Mikoyan have canvassed the possibility of receiving British machine tools and even machinery made to specification for Soviet factories.

Even though Whitehall follows a course of closer cooperation with Europe, relations between London and Washington will remain important. Anglo-American accord in the crucial sphere of military policy and the two-country agreements reached in a host of UN agencies established since the war indicate that Britain can not afford to disregard Washington's views. Since both Britain and Europe are dependent on American economic aid for reconstruction, moreover, there is little likelihood that foreign policy makers in Whitehall can do more than hold aloof in Bevin's cautious manner from the growing Russian-American rift.

GRANT S. MCCLELLAN

(Britain's domestic and foreign economic problems will be discussed in later articles.)

FRANCE TROUBLED BY GROWING TENSION IN NORTH AFRICA

In his third speech since emerging from political retirement, General Charles de Gaulle on May 15 told a crowd of 60,000 in Bordeaux that the French constitution must be changed if France is to save its colonial empire. Speaking at memorial services for Félix Eboué, the late Negro Governor General of Equatorial Africa, France's war leader contended that the constitution should provide for a "chief of state" independent of political parties to serve as a link between metropolitan France and the colonies.

OVERSEAS REBELLIONS. The General's remarks focus attention on widespread disturbances in France Overseas. In Indo-China, despite the presence of more than 100,000 French troops, soldiers of the Viet Nam Republic are still fighting. Rumors of impending peace negotiations should be viewed with caution, for Vietnamese morale has been bolstered by an uprising in Madagascar on March 29, and by growing nationalist agitation in other French possessions. Premier Ramadier of France miscalculated when he declared on April 3 that French

troop movements to suppress the Madagascar insurrection were a promenade of no military importance. On May 15 it was reported that rebels were still attacking French posts and that the governor of Madagascar was to be replaced by the military commander, General Pellet.

Although the Indo-Chinese and Madagascar rebellions are monopolizing public attention, France's greatest imperial crisis is brewing in North Africa where Algerian, Tunisian and Moroccan nationalists hope to profit from French weakness and internal division. Political, strategic and economic considerations make North Africa the most valuable part of the French Empire, a fact conceded even by those who argue that "colonies do not pay."

ARAB NATIONALISM. Nearly a third of the population of France Overseas lives in this "Western Island" of the Arab world. The inhabitants of Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco differ in many respects from those Arabs who dwell in the seven states of the Arab League, but many North African leaders

have a strong pan-Arabic feeling of cultural solidarity. Exiles from all three states, backed by the Arab League, have organized a joint liberation movement in Cairo and hope to persuade one of the Arab states to plead their cause before the United Nations General Assembly. When the Jewish Agency was given a hearing during the recent special session of the Assembly, Arab leaders were heard to contend unofficially that this precedent would enable Tunisian nationalists to present their case for independence.

Whether or not such threats are carried out, France is confronted by the possibility of further uprisings. Even in Morocco, where the native nationalist movement is weakest, the French suppressed an abortive attempt at independence in January 1944. In a dramatic statement made on April 10, 1947 during a widely publicized visit to Tangier, the Sultan of Morocco emphasized the unity of Morocco with Islam and the Arab countries. Since the Sultan spoke in the presence of Erik Labonne, French Resident General of Morocco, he had been expected to pay tribute to the idea of the French Union. His failure to do so was a blow to the French. Labonne was shortly recalled to Paris, and on May 14 the chief of staff of the French armies, General Alphonse-Pierre Juin, was appointed to replace him. Meanwhile, on April 19, General Jacques Leclerc, war hero and a leading French specialist in motorized warfare, was named inspector of land, naval and air forces in North Africa.

While probably not more than 3,000 of Morocco's 8,000,000 inhabitants participate in the nationalist movement, there are reportedly more than 200,000 members of the illegal Destour party in Tunisia, in a total population of 2,600,000, who want Tunisian independence. The Destour (Constitution) party is the oldest and best organized nationalist group in the three French possessions. Its exiled chief, Habib Bourguiba, recently visited the United States to seek American support.

The French made their position in Tunisia more

difficult by their mistake in deposing the war-time Tunisian ruler, Moncef Bey, on charges of collaboration with the Germans. The Bey lives comfortably in France, reportedly on an income of 300,000 francs a month, but Destour propaganda is making him a legendary martyr in exile.

ALGERIAN THREAT. The heart of the French North African problem, however, is Algeria where a European population of 1,000,000 is heavily outnumbered by 7,000,000 native Africans. Tunisia and Morocco, as Jules Ferry said of Tunisia when that country became a French protectorate in 1881, are keys to France's house in Algeria. Just as the French fear that successful rebellions in Indo-China and Madagascar would lead to uprisings in Tunisia and Morocco, they are also afraid that complete independence for Tunisia and Morocco would have violent repercussions in Algeria. A year ago the leading Algerian nationalist was Fehrat Abbas of Sétif who advocated autonomy for Algeria within the French Union. When this program failed to win French support the nationalist movement became more extreme. Today its outstanding leader is Messali Hadj who campaigns for Algerian independence. Tension in Algeria has already produced one outbreak—an insurrection in and around Sétif on May 8, 1945—which resulted in the death of over a hundred Europeans and several thousand natives. French tanks and armored cars are now patrolling this mountainous Kabylie region.

France is by no means contenting itself merely with a display of force to maintain its position. The war brought to the fore a progressive group of colonial reformers who hope to placate North African nationalists by a series of political, economic, social and educational concessions. But France is weak, and native leaders sense that the time is ripe for an intransigent stand. They are further encouraged by the attitude of French Communists who insist that the government negotiate with rebel leaders in Indo-China and Madagascar. The crisis is grave, but there is no reason to believe that the constitutional change proposed by General de Gaulle would bring it to an end. De Gaulle represents a conservative element in French colonial thought. France's best chance to save its empire is to give greater authority to progressive groups.

VERNON MCKAY

Jane's Fighting Ships, 1944-45 (corrected to April 1946), edited by Francis E. McMurtrie. New York, Macmillan, 1947. \$19.00

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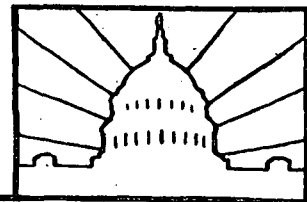
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Washington News Letter



HOW CAN U.S. HELP TO RELIEVE WORLD FOOD SHORTAGE?

Food shortages of the kind which have inspired recent political discontent in the American and British occupation zones in Germany, notably the threat of labor unions in Stuttgart to call a general strike on May 22 in protest against low rations, also affect in some degree most European and Asiatic countries and some regions of North Africa, postponing the world's return to political and economic stability. Efforts of the few food exporting countries to strike a balance between world food production and world needs indicate that, under present circumstances, the problem of malnutrition can be alleviated but not solved. Even under the most favorable pre-war circumstances the main exporting countries—the United States, Canada, Australia, Argentina, and New Zealand—would not have been able to provide enough sustenance food for everybody throughout the world. But the United States, which already furnishes the largest amounts of critical foods used abroad, and Argentina could somewhat increase their current exports.

MANY CAUSES OF FOOD SHORTAGES. The present food shortage is due to difficulties of distribution as well as to inadequate production. Shortages of foreign exchange have led many countries to reduce food buying to the lowest possible degree in a desperate effort to rehabilitate their basic economies by importing capital goods. The United States hopes to ease this foreign exchange difficulty in a small measure for China, Greece, Italy, Austria, Trieste and perhaps Poland and Hungary with the \$350,000,000 tentatively authorized by Congress in the relief bill adopted on May 16—although this sum is but a drop in the bucket. The exchange problem, however, also cuts the rations of wealthier nations that will not benefit from the relief fund, including the United Kingdom and France. Moreover, the fact that all countries are forced to use large portions of their foreign exchange for food purchases postpones the buying of urgently needed machinery and tools, and thus delays industrial reconstruction. A further factor in the food problem is the swift rise in prices here, which has reduced the real value of the \$4,400,000,000 we loaned Britain and France a year ago to assist them in buying food and other American goods. A world-wide shortage of ships, lack of port facilities in Argentina, and shortages of box cars for transportation of port-bound foodstuffs within the United States have intensified the world ration problem by slowing down the movement of food to the importing nations.

As far as can now be determined, the food shortage may continue into mid-1948. Drought in 1946 and extraordinary cold and moisture last winter promise poor harvests for Europe in 1947. The world this year needs 7,000,000 tons of fats exports, but is likely to receive about 3,300,000. Some 38,000,000 tons of cereals are required, while the supply available will be about 24,000,000. Food for livestock has been used to satisfy the need for cereals, cutting down meat production. Moreover, manufacture of fertilizer and farm machinery is much below what is needed to restore farm production abroad.

The peoples that suffer most are those who in normal times were net food importers. Even Germany produced only 85 per cent of its food in 1938, and Germany, as a result of the war, has lost 25 per cent of the land on which that 85 per cent was raised. Sir John Boyd Orr, Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization, reported on April 12 that German food consumption was at a semi-starvation level, "with the inevitable result of famine oedema and other grave symptoms of under-feeding." German malnutrition, in turn, slows down world recovery by reducing the amount of coal the hungry Ruhr and Saar miners can produce.

HELPFUL MEASURES. The International Emergency Food Council will hold its fourth meeting in Washington May 26 to recommend how its thirty-two member nations can best cope with the shortages. D. A. Fitzgerald, IEFC Secretary-General, appealed to President Juan Perón of Argentina on May 9 to increase Argentine grain exports during the critical pre-harvest months of May, June, and July. The United States has stimulated full production through farmer-subsidies. The current wheat crop is expected to set a new record, and should make possible larger exports. The American government is using sixteen war plants to produce fertilizer for world needs. On May 14 Washington decided to send to Germany by July 1, 200,000 tons of food above amounts previously allocated, and on May 15 announced that France would receive 150,000 long tons of corn in addition to the 69,000 tons of wheat and flour agreed upon in April. Yet the United States could put its food to greater foreign use by a few restrictions on consumption at home, for example, by raising the extraction rate for flour, requiring lighter milling of rice, and further limiting the use of cereals and sugar beverages.

BLAIR BOLLES